



A BETTER WORD

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

A Study Through the Life of King Jesus | with Pastor Nick Gatzke

The Struggle in Waiting

Mark 5:21–43

THE BIG IDEA

A life of faith is marked by desperate dependence on Jesus. He is never early and he is never late — do not fear, only believe.

SERMON SUMMARY

Two desperate people, and nothing else in common. Jairus is a synagogue ruler — wealthy, respected, almost certainly aligned with the men trying to destroy Jesus. His daughter is dying, so he sets his status down in the dirt and begs. The woman is the opposite: bleeding twelve years, ceremonially unclean, isolated, broke from paying physicians who only made her worse. She has no name in the text. Both of them have to wait.

She reaches for the hem of his cloak and is healed instantly — and Jesus stops the whole procession to find her. Her faith was simple, uninformed, almost superstitious, but its object was Jesus, and he calls her Daughter. Meanwhile Jairus hears the worst news there is. After being told that his daughter is dead, Jesus says, “Do not fear, only believe.” At the house Jesus sits on the bed, takes a dead girl’s hand, and speaks a pet name: little lamb, get up. He would not be rushed. His timing was perfect.

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Compare Jairus and the woman — status, wealth, family, standing before God. What do two people this different have in common by verse 34? What does that say about who gets access to Jesus?
2. Her faith was simple and partly mistaken; she thought the cloth itself would do it. Yet Jesus says her faith made her well (v. 34). What actually makes faith saving — its strength and accuracy, or its object? Read Hebrews 11:6.
3. Jesus could have let her slip away healed and anonymous. Why does he stop everything and make her speak publicly (vv. 30–33)? What did going public accomplish for her that a quiet healing would not have?
4. Jairus is told his daughter is dead, and Jesus answers, “Do not fear, only believe” (v. 36). He is now being asked to believe something larger than he came for. When has a delay from God stretched your faith rather than merely frustrated it?
5. “Talitha cumi” is a tender name — little lamb. What does Jesus’ gentleness with a twelve-year-old girl and with an outcast woman add to everything Mark has shown about his authority? Why do we need both?

LIVING IT OUT

A trapeze flyer lets go, arcs into the air, and does exactly one thing: he stays still and waits. The flyer must never try to catch the catcher. That is what waiting on God asks of us — not passivity, but trust while something we cannot see is happening. He is never late. He is never early. Some of you have been waiting a very long time.

Heart Check: What have you been waiting on God for, and what has the waiting done to your view of him? Are you asking him for the small things while still holding back on the largest one — your need for forgiveness?

This Week: Write down the thing you are waiting on, and under it write, “Do not fear, only believe.” Pray it back to God every day this week. Then find someone else in a long wait and sit with them in it — no fixing, just presence and prayer.

REFLECTION & PRAYER

“Do not fear, only believe.”

— **Mark 5:36**

Tell God plainly where the waiting has become painful, and confess any anger you have carried in it. Then ask him to turn your desperation into dependence, and to help you trust a timing you cannot yet see.

Your Prayer:

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